

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

- 1 (Currently Amended).        A blood filter comprising
- a filter pad assembly comprising ~~at~~ an inlet layer, an outlet layer, and at least one intermediate layer that comprises a fiber filter media,
- a filter housing comprising a first flexible housing element overlying the inlet layer of the filter pad assembly and a second flexible housing element overlying the outlet layer of the filter pad assembly,
- a peripheral seal formed by the application of radio frequency heating and pressure in a single step to join the first and second flexible housing elements directly to the filter pad assembly, the peripheral seal comprising a commingled melted matrix comprising material of the first and second housing elements and fiber filter media of the filter pad assembly,
- an inlet port in the first housing element spaced from the peripheral seal for conveying blood to the filter pad assembly, and
- an outlet port in the second housing element spaced from the peripheral seal for conveying blood from the filter pad assembly.
- 2 (Original).        A blood filter according to claim 1
- wherein the first and second housing elements include rims that are sealed together outwardly of the peripheral seal and outwardly of the peripheries of layers of the filter pad assembly.
- 3 (Original).        A blood filter according to claim 1
- wherein the inlet and outlet ports each include an axis that is generally parallel to a plane of the inlet layer and the outlet layer, respectively.
- 4 (Currently Amended).        A blood filter according to claim 1
- wherein the inlet ~~filter~~ layer comprises a prefilter.
- 5 (Original).        A blood filter according to claim 4
- wherein the prefilter comprises a fiber filter media.
- 6 (Original).        A blood filter according to claim 1
- wherein the at least one intermediate layer comprises a fiber filter media that removes leukocytes from blood.

7 (Original). A method of removing leukocytes from blood using the blood filter according to claim 1, comprising the step conveying blood from a source through the filter pad assembly to remove leukocytes.

8 (Original). A blood collection system comprising  
a container,  
tubing communicating with the container, and  
a blood filter according to claim 1 carried in line in the tubing.